

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A powertrain of an automatic transmission, comprising:

a first planetary gear set having first, second, and third operational elements, the first, second, and third operational elements occupying sequential positions in a lever diagram;

a second planetary gear set having fourth, fifth, and sixth operational elements, the fourth, fifth, and sixth operational elements occupying sequential positions in a lever diagram; and

a third planetary gear set having seventh, eighth, and ninth operational elements, the seventh, eighth, and ninth operational elements occupying sequential positions in a lever diagram,

wherein:

the first operational element is fixedly connected to the fourth operational element and always receives an input torque;

the second operational element is fixedly connected to the ~~seventh~~ ninth operational element and always outputs an output torque;

the third operational element is variably connected to ~~either~~ of the eighth operational element ~~and the ninth operational element~~ via a second clutch;

the fifth operational element is always stationary;

~~the fifth operational element is variably connected to the ninth operational element via a first clutch;~~

the sixth operational element is variably connected to the seventh operational element via a first clutch;

the seventh operational element is subject to a stopping operation of a second brake;
and

~~the sixth operational element is always stationary;~~

the eighth operational element is variably connected to an input shaft via a third clutch and is subject to a stopping operation of a first brake; ~~and~~

~~the ninth operational element is subject to a stopping operation of a second brake.~~

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The powertrain of claim 12, wherein:
the first and ~~second~~ third planetary gear sets are single pinion planetary gear sets;
the first, second, and third operational elements are respectively a sun gear, a carrier,
and a ring gear of the first planetary gear set; and
the ~~fourth, fifth, and sixth~~ seventh, eighth, and ninth operational elements are
respectively a ~~ring gear, sun gear~~, a carrier, and a ~~sun gear ring gear~~ of the ~~second~~ third
planetary gear set.

4. (Currently Amended) The powertrain of claim 12, wherein:
the ~~third~~ second planetary gear set is a double pinion planetary gear set; and
the ~~seventh, eighth, and ninth~~ fourth, fifth, and sixth operational elements are
respectively a sun gear, a carrier, ring gear, and a carrier ring gear of the ~~third~~ second
planetary gear set.

5. (Currently Amended) The powertrain of claim 12, wherein the first, second,
and third planetary gear sets are arranged in the order of the first, third, and second planetary
gear sets.

6. (Currently Amended) A powertrain of an automatic transmission,
comprising:
a first operational element fixedly connected to a fourth operational element, and
configured to always receive an input torque;
a second operational element fixedly connected to a ~~seventh~~ ninth operational
element and configured to always output an output torque;
a third operational element variably connected to ~~either~~ of an eighth operational
element or a ~~ninth~~ operational element via a second clutch;
a ~~fifth~~ sixth operational element variably connected to the ~~ninth~~ seventh operational
element via a first clutch; and
a ~~sixth~~ fifth operational element configured to be stationary;
wherein the eighth operational element is variably connected to an input shaft via a
third clutch and is subject to a stopping operation of a first brake, and the ~~ninth~~ seventh

operational element is subject to a stopping operation of a second brake.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The powertrain of claim 6, wherein:
the first, second and third operation elements comprise a first planetary gear set;
the fourth, fifth and sixth operational elements comprise a second planetary gear set;
and
the seventh, eighth and ninth operational elements comprise a third planetary gear set.

9. (New) A powertrain of an automatic transmission, comprising:
a first planetary gear set having a first sun gear, a first pinion carrier, and a first ring gear that occupy sequential positions relative to each other;
a second planetary gear set having a second sun gear, a second pinion carrier, and a second ring gear that occupy sequential positions relative to each other;
a third planetary gear set having a third sun gear, a third pinion carrier, and a third ring gear that occupy sequential positions relative to each other;
an input shaft; and
an output shaft;
wherein:
said first sun gear is connected with said second sun gear;
said first pinion carrier is connected with said third ring gear;
said first ring gear is connected with said third pinion carrier;
said second pinion carrier is always stationary;
said second ring gear is variably connected with said third sun gear;
said input shaft is connected with said first sun gear, said second sun gear, and said third pinion carrier; and
said output shaft is connected with said first pinion carrier and said third ring gear.

10. (New) The powertrain of claim 9, wherein said first and third planetary gear sets are single pinion planetary gear sets.

11. (New) The powertrain of claim 9, wherein said second planetary gear set is a double pinion planetary gear set.

12. (New) The powertrain of claim 9, wherein said first, second, and third planetary gear sets are arranged in the order of the first, third, and second planetary gear sets.